

The finish carpenter's tool & setup reference

LET'S BUILD STUFF / REVIEWED OCTOBER 9, 2026

Choose tools for the job, then use the task guide for its exact method. A practical reference from the reviewed Sun's Up kit; no signup required.



DeWalt miter saw from the site photo library. DWS779 is verified by its separate label photo.



Bostitch BTFP12233: the actual label shows the model and 18-ga size.

Common finish fastening

Tool	Reach for it when...	Reviewed lengths
15-ga finish	Door jambs, closets, cleats and heavier stock	2-3/4 in primary for jambs/closets/cleats
18-ga brad	General trim and delicate edges; default finish nailer	1-1/4 to 1-3/4 in
23-ga pin	Small returns and delicate pieces	3/4 to 1-3/8 in; match the tool
1/4-in crown stapler	Cabinet backs and thin stock where called for	1/2 to 1-1/2 in; match the tool

Occasional work: a framing gun is available, but framing nails are not routine truck stock. Structural work commonly uses screws. Use the actual guide, design and product requirements; this is not a structural fastener schedule.

[Brad & finish nailers: uses and full guide](#)

Cut clean. Support the stock.

Miter saw: DeWalt is the main crew lineup. Cut factory ends clean; support long pieces on both sides. **Track saw:** straight cuts in panels and long shelving stock. **Circular saw:** stringers and rough cuts. Use the tool manual and the job guide.

[Miter saws](#) | [Track saw](#) | [Blades & abrasives](#)

Layout, supplies & the final check

Use the level that fits the work. Routine casing follows the jamb reveal; routine baseboard installation does not need a level.



Level and square in an actual jobsite photo. The image does not establish the level length.

Reviewed level uses

Six-foot: door jamb plumb checks.

Four-foot: handrails, newel posts and stair-nosing layout.

Torpedo: closet cleats and caps. No fixed torpedo length is claimed.

[Layout & measuring](#)

Alignment context: 1/16 in over 4 ft, or 1/8 in over 8 ft, is Dave's reviewed finish-alignment example. It is not a universal code, structural or safety limit. Check the particular guide.

What belongs in the kit

Normal supplies: appropriate wood glue, wood-joint filler, sandpaper, shims, bits, finish nails, pins, staples, blades and floor protection. Match fasteners to the tool, material and task.

Wood-to-wood joints are ours: glue, fill and sand miters and splices so the pieces meet flush and clean. Bondo is not routine miter filler; it may have a role in major painted repairs.

Painter scope: nail-hole filling, caulking, painting, staining and general surface preparation. Joint sanding remains carpenter scope. Sweep scraps and debris before leaving.

Before the first cut

1. Read the job guide and check its difficulty, dimensions and requirements.
2. Check the actual tool, blade or fastener compatibility and condition.
3. Support stock and protect floors. Keep guards and work areas clear.
4. Use eye, hearing and suitable dust protection and the tool manual's precautions.
5. Pause at the guide's quality checks; fix the fit before moving on.

Start with a job

[Baseboard](#) | [Standard prehung door](#) | [Closet standards](#)

[Garage steps - Advanced](#): read the safety, handrail and landing requirements first.

Internal links only. No merchant links or attributed quotes. Tool facts follow STANDARD_TOOLS v1.1 and Dave's October 9 homepage review.